REMARKS

Claims 1-17 are pending in the application. Claims 14, 16 and 17 have been allowed. Claims 4 and 10 have been withdrawn from consideration in response to a restriction requirement. Applicants have amended claims 1, 3, 6, 8, and 15. Claims 2 and 9 have been cancelled. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

1. Claim 15 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. Claim 15 has been amended to more clearly describe the external impedance elements. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 15 under §112 is respectfully requested.

2. Claims 8 and 11-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 09-202425. Applicants respectfully traverse this ground of rejection.

JP 09-202425 fails to disclose an apparatus having an adjuster for adjusting the impedance of a vibration device, and a common power source, which is connected to more than two transducers for actuating the transducers simultaneously. JP 09-202425 discloses relays 21a and 21b located between transducers 16 and an oscillator 15. According to Figure 7, a switch 21a of the relay 21 is connected to a terminal 21c for the relay 21. A switch 22a of the relay 22 is connected to a terminal 22b of the relay 22. In this state, one of the transducers 16 is vibrated by the oscillator 15. That is, one of the transducers 16 is selectively vibrated in accordance with connecting the switches 21a, 22a to the corresponding terminals 21b, 21c, 22b, 22c.

On the other hand, in the claimed invention, the common power source is directly connected to two transducers, not a switch located between the power source and the transducers. Therefore, when the power source is activated, the transducers are simultaneously activated. This is shown by way of example, in Figure 1. Also, since the adjuster adjusts the impedance of the vibration device, the resonance frequencies of the vibration devices are equal; the object is therefore levitated in a stable manner.

Claim 8 has been amended to more clearly show the novelty of the present invention over the cited reference. Claims 11 – 13 depend directly or indirectly from claim 8. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 8 and 11 – 13 under §103(a) is respectfully requested.

3. Claim 9 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 09-20242, and further in view of Hashimoto et al. U.S. Patent No. 5,810,155. Claim 9 has been cancelled without prejudice.

4. Claims 1 and 5 – 7 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 09-202425, and further in view of Rey U.S. Patent No. 4,284,403. Applicants respectfully traverse this ground of rejection.

JP 09-202425 fails to disclose an apparatus having an adjuster for adjusting the impedance of a vibration device, and a common power source, which is connected to more than two transducers for actuating the transducers simultaneously. JP 09-202425 discloses relays 21a and 21b located between transducers 16 and an oscillator 15. According to Fig. 7, a switch 21a of the relay 21 is connected to a terminal 21c for the relay 21. A switch 22a of the relay 22 is connected to a terminal 22b of the relay 22. In this state, one of the transducers 16 is vibrated by

the oscillator 15. That is, one of the transducers 16 is selectively vibrated in accordance with connecting the switches 21a, 22a to the corresponding terminals 21b, 21c, 22b, 22c.

On the other hand, in the present invention, the common power source is directly connected to two transducers, not a switch located between the power source and the transducers. Therefore, when the power source is activated, the transducers are simultaneously activated. Also, since the adjuster adjusts the impedance of the vibration device, the resonance frequencies of the vibration devices are equal; the object is therefore levitated in a stable manner.

Claim 1 has been amended to more clearly recite the novel aspects of the present invention. Claims 5 – 7 depend directly from claim 1. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1 and 5 – 7 under §103(a) is respectfully requested.

5. Claims 2 and 3 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 09-202425, in further view of Rey, and further in view of Hashimoto et al. Claim 2 has been cancelled. Claim 3 has been amended to depend from claim 1, which is believed to be patentable to for at least the reasons stated above. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 3 under §103(a) is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

For these reasons, it is believed that all of the claims as currently presented are patentable, and that this application is in allowable condition.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required for the timely consideration of this amendment under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-4500, Order No. 5000-4967.

Respectfully submitted,
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